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Job Approval Rating for Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards

Edward Chervenak

University of New Orleans, echerven@uno.edu

Anthony Licciardi

University of New Orleans, alicia2@uno.edu

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**JOB APPROVAL RATING FOR LOUISIANA GOVERNOR
JOHN BEL EDWARDS**



October 2020

UNO Survey Research Center

Dr. Edward E. Chervenak, Director
echerven@uno.edu

Dr. Anthony Licciardi, Research Associate
alicia2@uno.edu

(504) 280-3217

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GOVERNOR JOHN BEL EDWARDS' JOB APPROVAL RATING

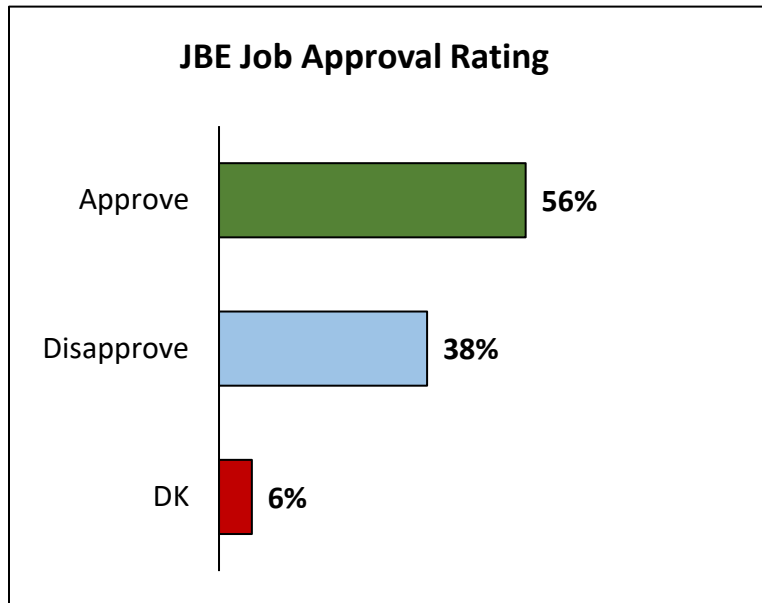
The University of New Orleans' Survey Research Center (SRC) conducted a statewide interactive voice response (IVR) survey asking Louisiana voters to rate the job performance of Democratic Governor John Bel Edwards. We also asked them about the Covid-19 virus. Survey respondents were randomly selected from the Louisiana Secretary of State's voter file. However, not all registered voters were eligible for the poll. Only those registered voters who had voted at least once in the past ten statewide elections¹ in Louisiana were selected for the sample.² The sample of 755 respondents was collected by telephone IVR on Thursday October 22, 2020 and yields a margin of error of +/- 3.6% with 95% confidence.

Readers should be cautious in making narrow inferences about sub-categorical cross tabulations of survey results. While a poll of 755 random respondents yields a +/- 3.6% margin of error, sub-categorical group samples by race, age, and gender are smaller than the total sample size, thus, leading to wider margins of error when they are reported in cross tabulations.

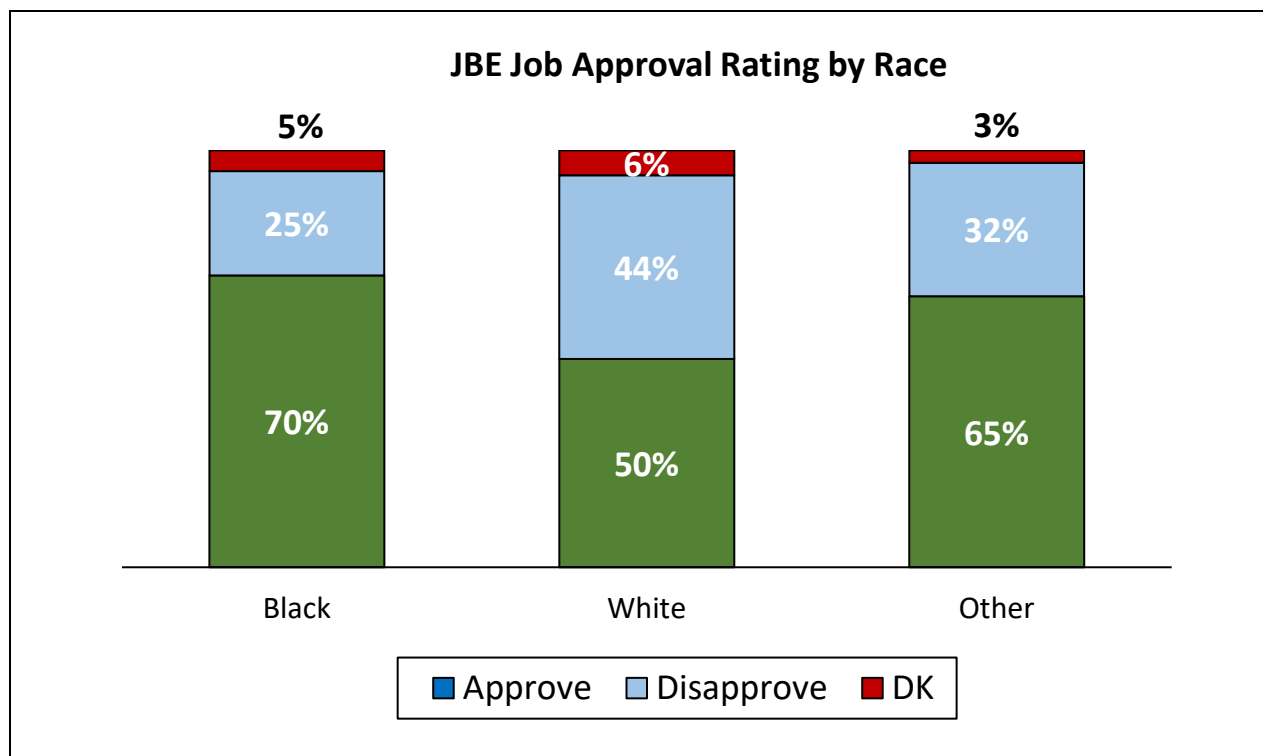
- Democratic Governor of Louisiana John Bel Edwards enjoys a 56 percent job approval rating.
- A gender gap is present in Edwards' approval ratings
- Partisanship influences how the governor is evaluated.
- Attitudes toward the Covid-19 virus are strongly related to how the governor is rated.

¹ The elections: November 2019 Governor runoff, October 2019 Governor Primary, December 2018 Secretary of State runoff, November 2018 Congressional election, November 2017 Statewide runoff, October 2017 Statewide primary, December 2016 Senate runoff, November 2016 Senate primary, November 2015 Gubernatorial Runoff, and October 2015 Gubernatorial Primary.

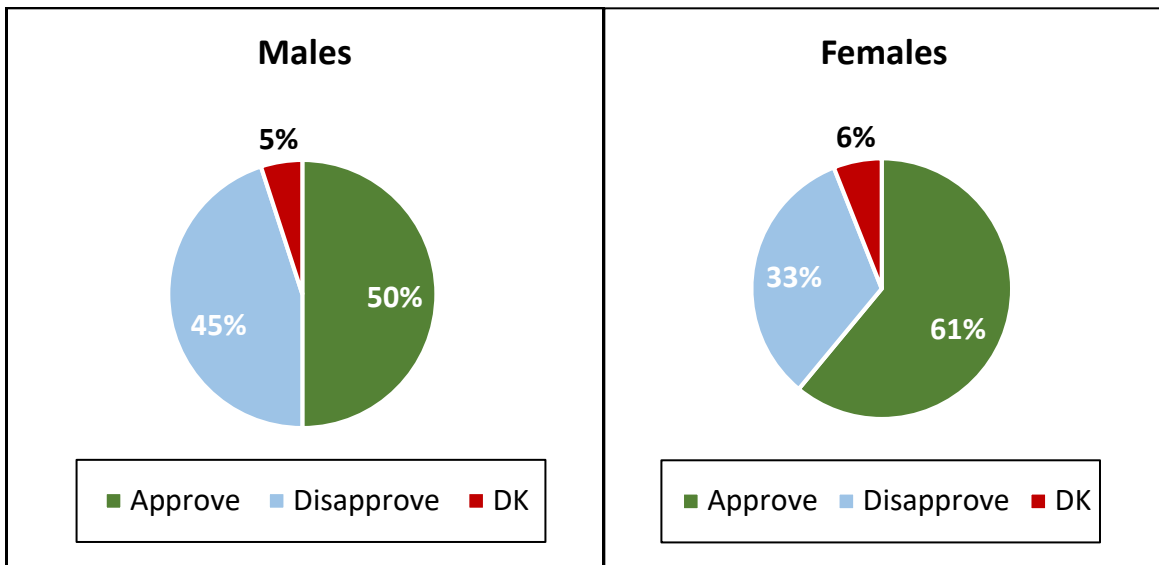
² We use the same sample as we did in examining preferences for president in Louisiana, the results of which we released in a previous report. We decided to release two reports using the same sample, one on who voters preferred in the presidential election and a second report on job approval ratings for Governor John Bel Edwards.



Respondents were asked how they rated the job performance of Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards. **Fifty-six percent of respondents rate the governor positively in how he is handling his responsibilities.** Thirty-eight percent report that they are unhappy with the governor's job performance. Six percent of respondents did not offer an opinion on how he is performing in office.



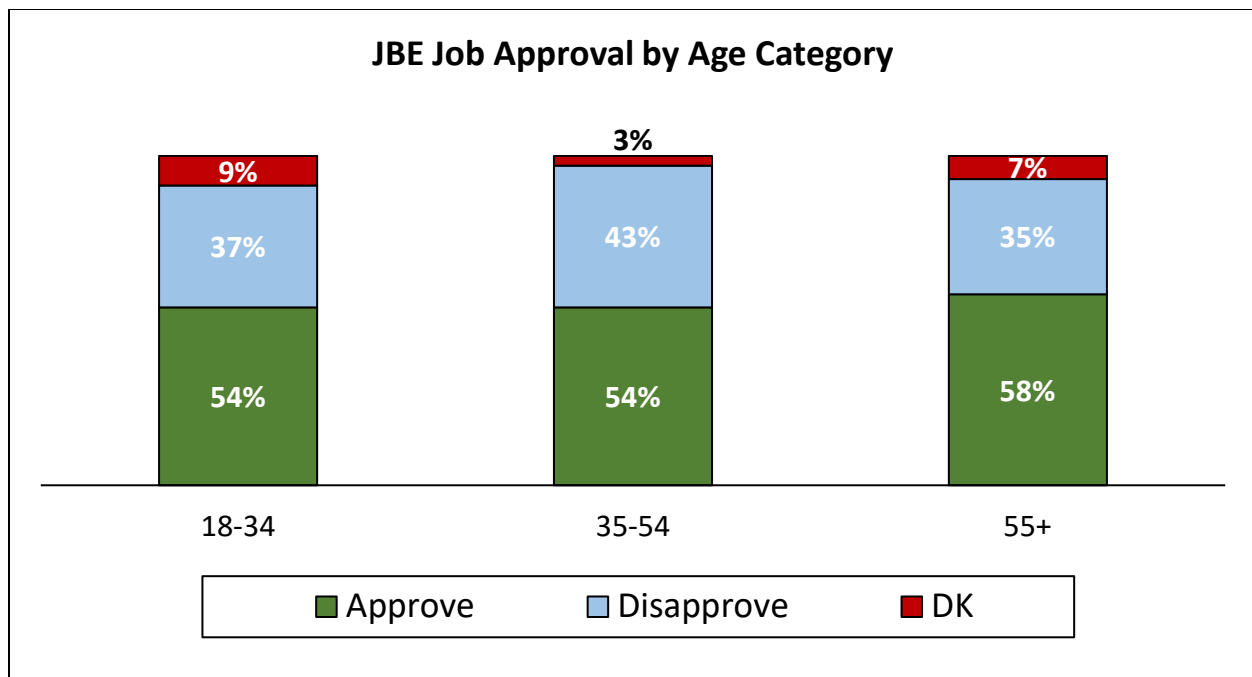
The bar chart demonstrates how ratings of Edwards break down by race. Seventy percent of African Americans and one-half of whites say they approve of the governor's performance in office. Whites, however, did communicate the highest level of dissatisfaction with Edwards. One-quarter of blacks are not approving of the job the governor is doing. Non-black minorities are twice as likely to answer that they approve of the governor than disapprove of him.



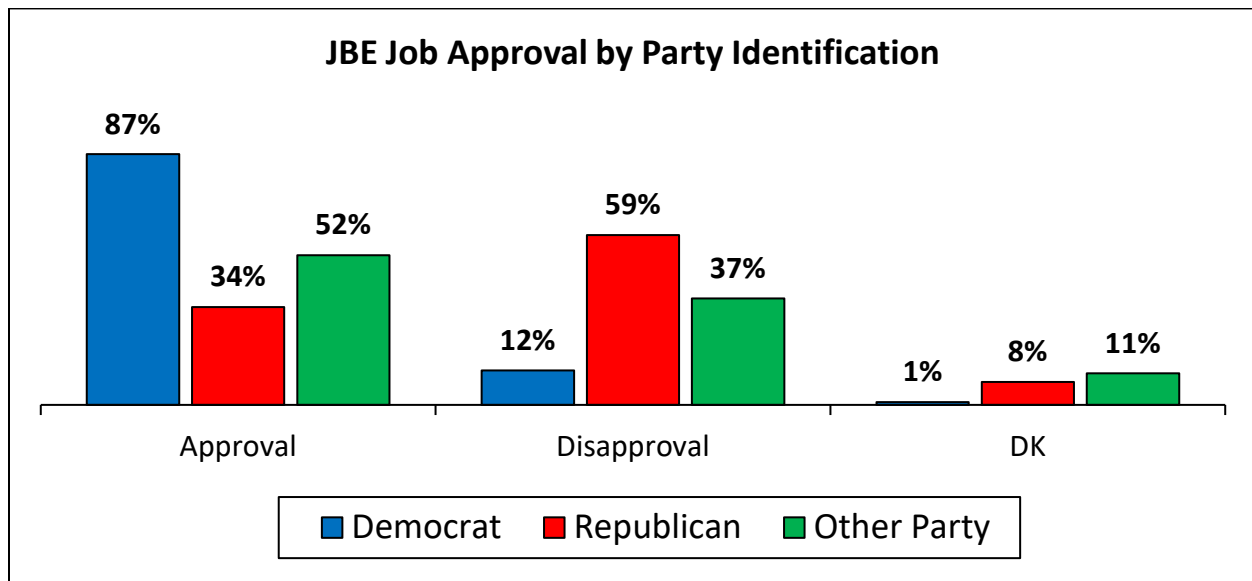
A gender gap is present in the approval ratings of John Bel Edwards. The percentage of women who approve of the governor’s job performance is eleven points higher than it is for men. On the other hand, the percentage of men who negatively evaluate the governor is twelve points higher than it is for women.

	Black Male	Black Female	White Male	White Female	Non-black Minority Male	Non-black Minority Female
Approve	60%	76%	45%	53%	57%	71%
Disapprove	30%	21%	51%	39%	43%	21%
Do not Know	10%	2%	4%	8%	0%	7%

When we examine the influence of race and gender together on Edwards’ approval rating, we find the gender gap persists across the racial and ethnic categories. Women, after controlling for race, are more approving of Edwards than are their male counterparts. The only distinction is the degree of difference in the gender gap. For example, the gender gap in approval among African Americans is twice that found for whites. There is a fourteen-point gender gap in approval for Edwards among non-black minorities and an even larger twenty-two-point gender gap in disapproval among this group of respondents.

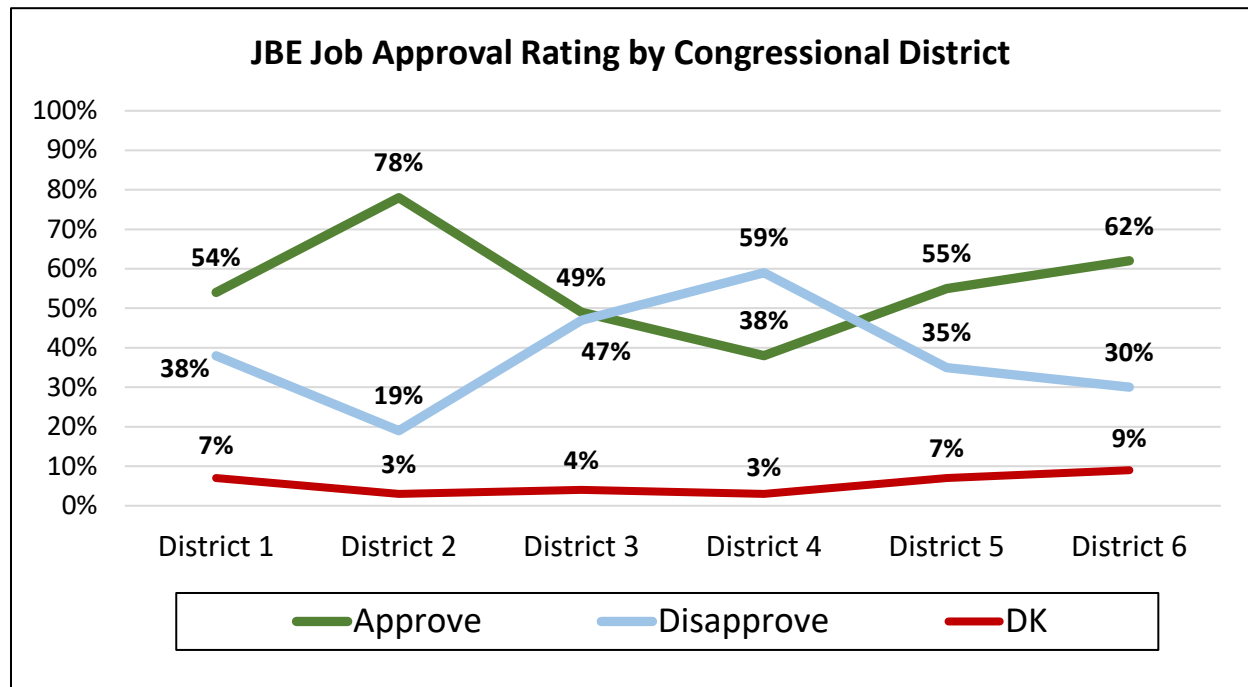


Age does not appear to have any influence on the perception of the governor's performance in office. The differences in both approval and disapproval across the three age cohorts is within the margin of error. As a result, we cannot say with any statistical confidence that there are any real differences in attitude across the three age categories.

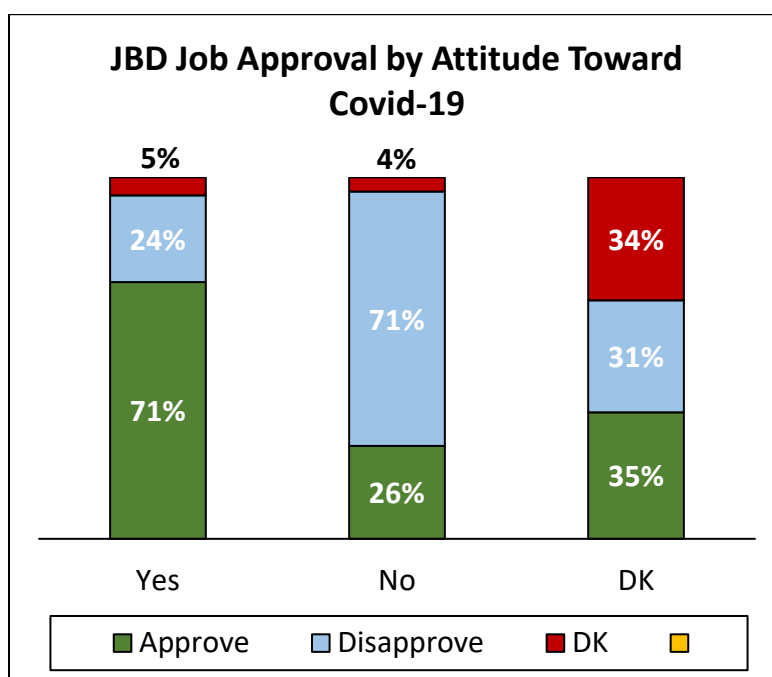
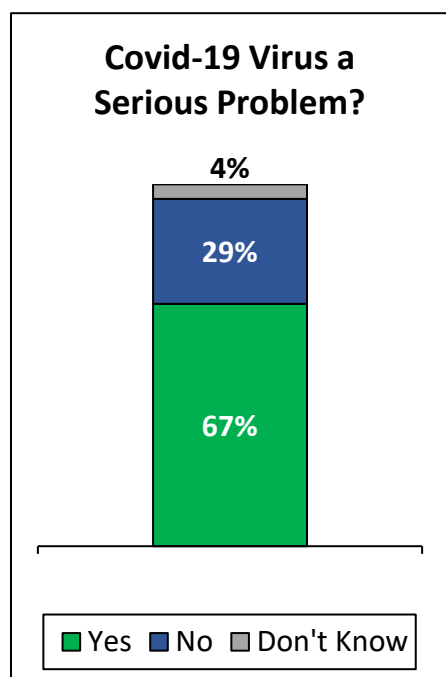


Not surprisingly, partisan identification shapes how the governor is rated. Nearly nine-of-ten Democrats approve of his job performance while six-in-ten Republicans

disapprove. Edwards, however, does receive positive ratings from one-third of Republicans and from a majority of Independents/Third Party members.



Approval ratings of Edwards are mixed across the state’s congressional districts. He finds himself in positive territory in four of the six districts. His highest approval rating comes from the state’s most Democratic district, the 2nd Congressional District. Edwards also enjoys an approval rating above fifty percent in the state’s most famously Republican district, the 1st Congressional District. The governor receives his lowest marks in the 4th Congressional District.



	Yes	No	DK
Black	76%	23%	1%
White	62%	33%	5%
Non-black Minority	80%	14%	6%
Male	64%	32%	4%
Female	69%	27%	4%
18-34	78%	22%	0%
35-54	58%	38%	4%
55+	69%	26%	5%
Democrat	87%	11%	2%
Republican	54%	40%	5%
Other Party	61%	35%	4%

Respondents were asked to give their opinion on whether they thought the Covid-19 virus is a serious problem or not. Two-thirds of the overall sample believe that the virus is a genuine concern. There are some distinctions in opinion across demographic groups. Blacks and non-black minorities are more likely than whites to agree that the Covid-19 virus should be taken seriously. Women are slightly more likely than men to express that opinion. The youngest age group is more likely to view the virus more critically than the two

older age cohorts. There is, however, a large degree of disagreement between Democrats and Republicans on how serious a problem the virus is. Nearly nine-in-ten Democrats think the virus is a significant issue while just over a majority of Republicans say the same thing.

Attitudes toward the virus influenced evaluations of the Louisiana governor. Among those who thought the virus was a serious problem, seven-in-ten approve of the job

he is doing. However, among those who believe the virus is not a serious issue, seven-in-ten disapprove of Edwards job performance.

Appendix

IVR surveys, also known as “robo-polls” employ an automated, recorded voice to call respondents who are asked to answer questions by punching telephone keys. Advantages of IVR surveys include their low cost, the almost immediate collection of data, and the simple and convenient processing of data. They also reduce interviewer bias to zero by eliminating the live human interviewer. Every survey respondent hears the same question read the same way. When conducting IVR surveys, pollsters must not rely on all details of a call list. They cannot assume that the details of the person in the file will match the individual who picks up the call. Demographic categories of race, age, gender, and political party identification must be self-reported by the respondent to ensure a valid and accurate analysis. Ideally, the sample of respondents should reflect the population of interest. Unfortunately, this is usually not the case. One of the problems with telephone surveys is non-response since some people may screen their calls or hang-up when called. This may cause some groups to be over- or under-represented.

Because IVR surveying is prohibited by FCC rules from calling cell phone numbers, only VOIP and home phone numbers can be called. The growing trend of minority and younger households without land lines can result in a coverage error. Residents who are cell phone only who would be eligible to participate are excluded from IVR polls unless they answer the survey from a home telephone in another home. As such, no reliable conclusions can be drawn from the observed survey data unless the sample has been post-weighted to correct for the lack of representativeness. It is imperative that survey analysts accurately post weight the cases to reflect the demographics of the population of interest. In this instance this sample was post-weighted to reflect gender, age, race, and congressional district parameters of the population of registered voters in Louisiana.

Script

- Do you approve or disapprove of the job performance of Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards? Press 1 for approve. Press 2 for disapprove. If you don't know press 3."
- Do you think that COVID-19 is a serious problem in Louisiana? Press 1 for yes. Press 2 for no. Press 3 if you don't know."
- If you are male press 1. If you are female press 2.
- If you are younger than 35, press 1. If you are between 35 and 54 years old, press 2. If you are older than 54, press 3.
- If you are Black, press 1. If you are white, press 2. If you are something else, press 3.

-If you consider yourself to be a Democrat, press 1, a Republican press 2, something else, press 3.

Frequency Tables

Q2-JBE APPROVAL

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	APPROVE	423	56.0	56.0	56.0
	DISAPPROVE	288	38.1	38.1	94.2
	DON'T KNOW	44	5.8	5.8	100.0
	Total	755	100.0	100.0	

Q3-COVID SERIOUS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	YES	505	66.9	66.9	66.9
	NO	221	29.3	29.3	96.2
	DON'T KNOW	29	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	755	100.0	100.0	

Q4-SEX

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	332	44.0	44.0	44.0
	FEMALE	423	56.0	56.0	100.0
	Total	755	100.0	100.0	

Q6-RACE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	BLACK	220	29.2	29.2	29.2
	WHITE	500	66.2	66.2	95.4
	OTHER RACE	35	4.6	4.6	100.0
	Total	755	100.0	100.0	

Q7-PARTY ID

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	DEMOCRAT	266	35.3	35.3	35.3
	REPUBLICAN	352	46.7	46.7	81.9
	OTHER PARTY	136	18.1	18.1	100.0
	Total	755	100.0	100.0	

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	DISTRICT 1	136	18.0	18.0	18.0
	DISTRICT 2	124	16.5	16.5	34.5
	DISTRICT 3	125	16.5	16.5	51.0
	DISTRICT 4	118	15.6	15.6	66.6
	DISTRICT 5	119	15.8	15.8	82.4
	DISTRICT 6	133	17.6	17.6	100.0
	Total	755	100.0	100.0	